

SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 25th March 2009

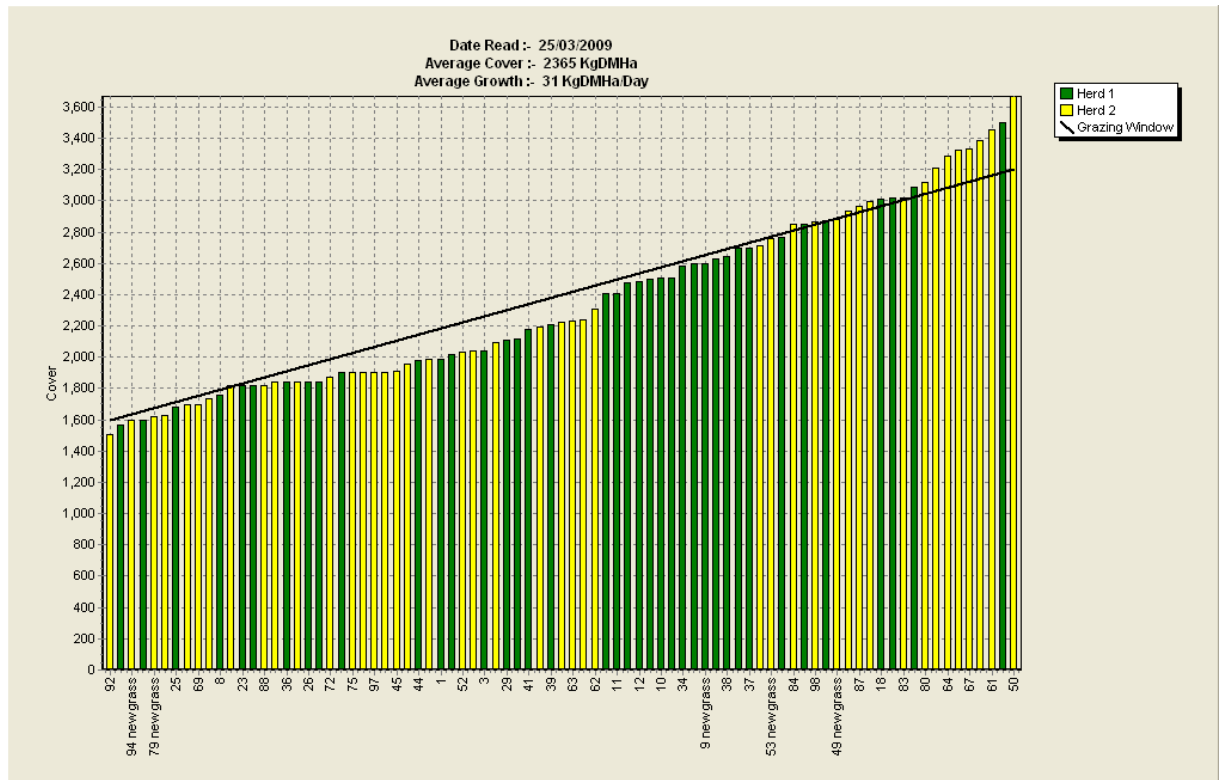
Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 28ha
Area in Grass Ha: 255ha
Area out Direct Drilled Short Rotation: 12 ha
Cows in Milk: 679 cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM /ha.**
2. **Setting up for the Autumn – lengthening the round, culling and drying off decisions.**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 12.5°C this week, dropping just over 1.5 degrees over the last fortnight.
4. Pasture growth this week was 31kg/DM/ha/day, similar to last week's 30kgDM/ha/day.
5. Average pasture cover is 2365 kg DM/ha, down from 2428 kg DM/ha last week. We have purchased a new platemeter and some of the average pasture cover drop is attributable to the use of this.
6. The 25th March pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



7. The target line is based on an area of 255 ha in pasture (12 ha was taken out of the round, sprayed, and drilled in short rotation ryegrass on 17th March). The stocking rate is 2.66 cows per pasture ha and we are now working on cow intakes of 15 kg/DM, using the $x 140 + 500$ rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover for this week is $(2.66 \times 40 \text{ day rotation} \times 15) + 1600 = 3196 \text{ kg DM /ha}$.
8. The round last week was 1/40th of the farm grazed per day. This week we aim to extend the round out further as our plan is to cull 43 cows - booked in to go tomorrow.
9. A shortfall is appearing mid-wedge, and we believe this has been caused by lower growth rates occurring on the paddocks grazed during the cold, wet southwesterly weather period that was prevalent 10 days ago.
10. We should (based on 15t DM/ha yield) have enough baleage to winter all our mixed age cows at home this winter.
11. Production is 2.82 kg MS/ha/day and 1.14 kg MS/cow/day.
12. We had our last herd test for the year on the 12th and 13th March. From this test we are making culling and drying off decisions.
13. We have a total of 104 cows confirmed empty at this stage from 707 cows tested. This is giving us a preliminary non-pregnant rate of 14.7%. This is from an 11 week mating period. The number of empties in the 2006 born cows is lower than the average at 11%. We had a 29% empty rate in the 1999 born and older cows.
14. 42% of the cows tested are confirmed in-calf to the first service.
15. R 2yr heifers were scanned on the 19th March 2009. The empty rate was 8% or 17 empties. This will give us replacement numbers of 218 in-calf heifers to go into the herd for next season.
16. On this basis, from the 707 cows and 235 rising 2 year heifers pregnancy tested, with the total 121 head diagnosed empty, we have 821 cows remaining available to winter. This will allow us to make further culling decisions.
17. We have revised our autumn feed budget, and at this stage we are reviewing the option to feed silage. By culling one unit load of cattle (43 head) tomorrow, with the revised average pasture covers, and applying 50 kg/ha urea to the farm over the next round (12.75 t urea), we are forecast to be able to milk the remaining cows through to late May by feeding some silage.
18. The group of 43 culls are empty, lower producing, high SCC cows that are definite culls, and some poorly uddered, older cows.
19. With the revised payout announcement at \$5.10 per kg milksolids, we are reviewing all of our farm working expenses. One area that we are looking at is winter cow grazing. Our plan is to winter all mixed age cows (550 head) on the 28 ha of winter crop plus 900 bales of baleage. We will need to achieve an average crop yield of 15 t DM/ha to achieve this. We are working on securing winter grazing for our in-calf heifers at a figure of around \$25 per head per week.

Future Management Planning

1. Extend round length further going into autumn
2. Culling and drying off decisions
3. Updating procedures manuals etc
4. Analysis of our reproductive intervention – CIDR's and induction, how have these cows performed reproductively?

The WEEKLY farm walk will be on **Wednesday 1st April 2009**.

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (COs DairyNZ).

SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 18th March 2009

Total Effective Ha: 295ha

Winter Crop Ha: 28ha

Area in Grass Ha: 267ha (22ha New Grass)

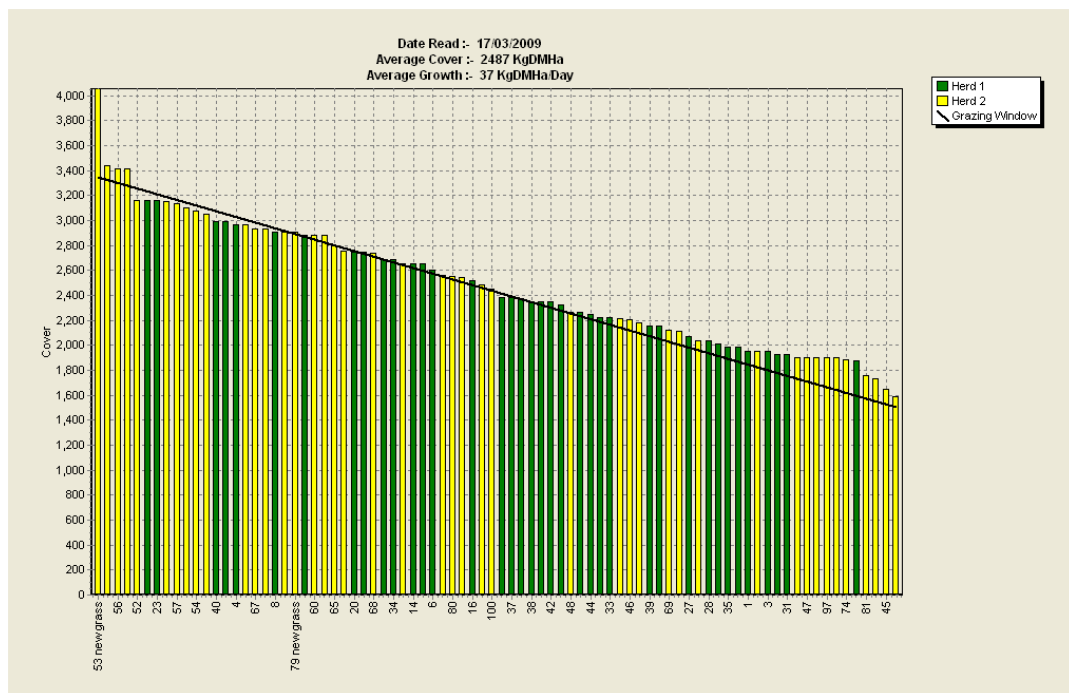
Cows in Milk: 693 cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM/ha**
2. **Setting up for the Autumn – lengthening the round, culling and drying off decisions**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 13°C this week, dropping just under 1 degree over the last fortnight.
4. Pasture growth this week was 37 kg DM/ha/day, up on last week's 30kgDM/ha/day.
5. Average pasture cover is 2487 kg DM/ha, compared with 2428 kg DM/ha last week.
6. The 18th March pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



7. The target line is based on an area of 267 ha in pasture. The stocking rate is 2.6 cows per pasture ha and we are working on cow intakes of 16 kg DM in an endeavour to keep our residuals at acceptable levels, using the $x 140 + 500$ rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover for this week is $(2.6 \times 42 \text{ day rotation} \times 16) + 1600 = 3347 \text{ kg DM /ha}$.
8. The round last week was 1/45th of the farm grazed per day. This week we aim to sit at 1/42nd of the farm grazed per day now that we have eaten off the longer paddocks.
9. We should (based on 15tDM/ha yield) have enough baleage to winter all our mixed age cows at home this winter.

10. Production is 2.9 kg MS/ha/day and 1.1 kg MS/cow/day.
11. We had our last herd test for the year on the 12th and 13th March. From this test we are making culling and drying off decisions.
12. Pregnancy testing of the 147 rechecks and 15 dry cows was conducted on the 17th March 2009. This data in conjunction with the herd test data will give us accurate information to make informed decisions.
13. We have 89 cows confirmed empty at this stage from 705 cows tested. This is giving us a preliminary non-pregnant rate of 12.6%. This is from an 11week mating period. We do still have a handful of cows to confirm and will update the stats as soon as the information becomes available.
14. The MT rate in the 2006 born heifers was lower than the whole herd at 10%. Our highest empty rate was in our 1999 and older group of cows. This could however be skewed by the small number of animals in the older group.
15. R2yr heifers are being scanned on the 19th March 2009. This will give us our final replacement numbers and an indication of the potential number of cows we can cull. We are hoping to cull a further 30-40 cows.
16. We will be wintering 800 cows this coming season.
17. Last week only 9 of the potential 16 cows were dried off to be culled as some were already confirmed in-calf so it was deemed better to wait until we had the luxury of culling cows that were in calf.
18. A further 4 were dried off for lameness reasons giving us 13 dried off or culled taking the number of dry cows on farm up to 28 in total.
19. Half of the cows confirmed empty will be culled next week with the remaining half following soon after. We will then go to the herd test data for further culls.
20. We have completed an autumn feed budget, at this stage we are not going to feed any supplements. We have enough feed going forward for the next week on a 1/40th rotation. We need to cull before we feed supplement.
21. 12 ha of old poor performing pasture was sprayed out earlier last week and drilled on the 17th March 2009.
22. With the revised payout announcement at \$5.10 per kg milksolids, we are reviewing all our farm working expenses. One area that we are looking at is winter cow grazing. Our plan is to winter all mixed age cows (550 head) on the 28 ha of winter crop plus 900 bales of baleage. We will need to achieve an average crop yield of 15 t DM / ha to achieve this. We are working on securing winter grazing for our in-calf heifers at a figure of around \$25 per head per week.

Future Management Planning

1. Extend round length going into autumn
2. Culling and drying off decisions
3. Updating procedures manuals etc
4. Analysis of our reproductive intervention – CIDR's and induction, how have these cows performed reproductively?

The WEEKLY farm walk will be on **Wednesday 25th March 2009**.

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (COs DairyNZ).

SDF Farm Walk Notes

Wednesday, 11th March 2009

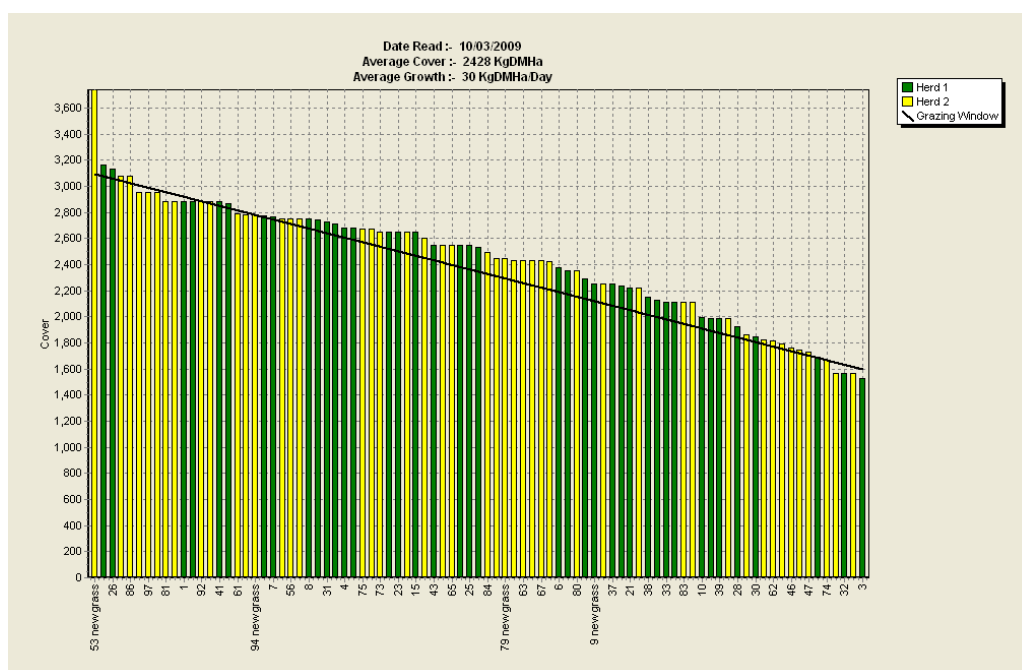
Total Effective Ha: 295ha
Winter Crop Ha: 28ha
Area in Grass Ha: 267ha (22ha New Grass)
Cows in Milk: 707 cows

Critical issues for the short term

1. **Maintain pasture residuals at 1500 – 1600 kg DM /ha**
2. **Setting up for the Autumn – lengthening the round, culling and drying off decisions**

Summary of Key Factors affecting Grazing Management & Animal Performance

3. Soil temperatures at 9 am have averaged 13.8⁰ C this week, dropping 1 degree over the last fortnight.
4. Pasture growth this week was 30 kg DM/ha/day (last week 41).
5. Average pasture cover is 2428 kg DM/ha, down from 2475 kg DM/ha last week.
6. The 11th March pasture feed wedge is below. The green bars are paddocks grazed by herd 1, the yellow bars are grazed by herd 2.



7. The target line is based on an area of 267 ha in pasture. The stocking rate is 2.66 cows per pasture ha and we are working on cow intakes of 16 kg DM in an endeavour to keep our residuals at acceptable levels, using the $x140+500$ rising plate meter equation. The pre-grazing target cover for this week is $(2.66 \times 35 \text{ day rotation} \times 16) + 1600 = 3090 \text{ kg DM/ha}$.

8. The round last week was 1/35th of the farm grazed per day.
9. We should have enough baleage to winter all our mixed age cows at home this winter, but due to continuing surpluses we will need to take out further supplement.
10. Production is 3.1 kg MS/ha/day and 1.16 kg MS/cow/day.
11. We have pulled forward our last herd test from April to Thursday and Friday 12th and 13th March. From this test we will be able to make culling and drying off decisions.
12. Pregnancy testing of the 147 rechecks and 15 dry cows is booked in for Tuesday 17th March 2009. This data, in conjunction with the herd test data, will give us accurate information to make informed decisions.
13. We have however decided to cull 16 cows prior to receiving this information. These cows are high SCC, low producers, with both negative PW and LW.
14. The next lot of culls will be based on the pregnancy diagnosis, all cows confirmed empty will be culled before feeding supplement. Depending on the number of empty cows we will then go to the herd test data for further culls.
15. We have completed an autumn feed budget, at this stage we are not going to feed any supplements. We have enough feed going forward for the next week on a 1/35th rotation. We will cull before we feed supplement.
16. 12ha of old poor performing pasture was sprayed out earlier in the week and will be drilled by the end of the week.
17. With the revised payout announcement at \$5.10 per kg milksolids, we are reviewing all our farm working expenses. One area that we are looking at is winter cow grazing. Our plan is to winter all mixed age cows (550 head) on the 28 ha of winter crop plus 900 bales of baleage. We will need to achieve an average crop yield of 15t DM/ha to achieve this. We are working on securing winter grazing for our in-calf heifers at a figure of around \$25 per head per week.

Future Management Planning

1. Extend round length going into autumn
2. Culling and drying off decisions

The WEEKLY farm walk will be on **Wednesday 18th March 2009**.

On behalf of the **Management Group** Matt Hart (Farm Manager), Alex Hunter (Consultant), Sharn Edwards, Desiree Moseley (COs DairyNZ).